



ISAA

National Newsletter

Independent Scholars Association of Australia Inc

The Boab tree is self-sustaining; it draws on its own resources

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MEMBERSHIP

\$80—Full members
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\$140—Household
\$75—Concessional Household

President's Report

Welcome to the March 2025 Newsletter.

It seems that this year, 2025, will continue to see significant initiatives for ISAA.

The February meeting of ISAA Council endorsed the recommendation that the next ISAA Conference be held in 2026. This is in recognition of the smaller number of members actively engaged in research and declining attendance.

Sydney is to be considered as a venue; NSW has the largest number of active members, and it is easier to get to Sydney than to Canberra from most parts of Australia. Watch this space for updates, as they say.

I am pleased to say that the preparation of the 2024 Conference Proceedings is well underway and we hope they will be in your letterbox in the middle of the year.

ISAA Review for 2025 will be your end of year reading to look forward to. Christine de Matos and Ron Popenhagen have volunteered to take on the role of Assistant Editors of *ISAA Review* at least for 2025. They have put out a call for contributions and have also called for expressions of interest in membership of the Editorial Board. The **deadline for submission of contributions is Monday 16 June 2025**, for publication in the second half of 2025.

Please send queries and contributions to info@isaa.org.au. We look forward to receiving your contributions to the 2025 issue! The deadline for Expressions of Interest in the Editorial Board is **Friday 28 March 2025** to info@isaa.org.au.

Alan Roberts has agreed to continue as Book Reviews editor for 2025. If you are interested in writing a review, again, please send details to info@isaa.org.au.

PYC

To pique your curiosity this time, my focus is on the importance of open access for scholarship. As you will have guessed, I am

ISAA President's Report cont.

a strong supporter of open access initiatives – public libraries and the state libraries in Australia are fine examples of open access. The National Library's Trove project is world-leading.

Independent scholars often note that lack of access to data for their research is a significant deterrent. But there are open access sources available to scholars. The lists below are just the tip of the iceberg, and fortunately one that is consolidating rather than melting away.

To get a sense of the variety of data available, you can search <https://commonslibrary.org/guide-to-publicly-available-data-sources/> or a university library LibGuide such as: <https://latrobe.libguides.com/datasets/Australian-international>

Government data are well recognised as invaluable sources to support various kinds of investigation. You can search here: <https://architecture.digital.gov.au/australian-government-data-catalogue>

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Dr Hilary Yerbury
ISAA National President

The screenshot shows the Project Gutenberg website. At the top is a navigation bar with links for 'About', 'Search and Browse', and 'Help'. Below this is a search bar and a 'Quick search' button. The main heading is 'Welcome to Project Gutenberg', followed by the text 'Project Gutenberg is a library of over 75,000 free eBooks'. A paragraph explains that users can choose among free epub and Kindle eBooks, download them, or read them online. Below this is a grid of ten book covers with their titles and authors: 'The Nile quest by Harry Hamilton', 'Greek wayfarers, and other poems by Peter Rosegger', 'Sonderlinge by Peter Rosegger', 'Ladies' dress shoes of the nineteenth by Richard Arthur', 'A high wind in Jamaica by Richard Arthur', 'Deirdre wed and other poems by', 'Essays towards the history of', 'Poems by Marie Van Vorst', 'The Victim and The Worm by Phyllis', and 'Die vom Niederrhein by Rudolf Herzog'. A link 'Click Here for more latest books!' is provided. At the bottom, there are three sections: 'No fee or registration!', 'New donation option with Give Freely', and '50 years of eBooks 1971-2021'.

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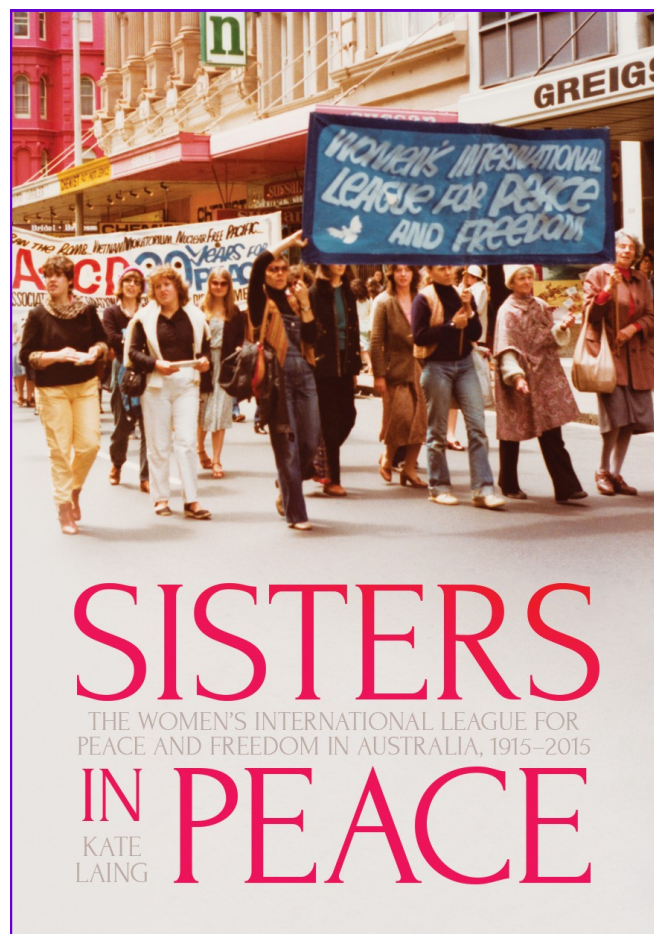
News from ISAA NSW

ISAA NSW ended the year 2024 with its Christmas Lunch at Barracks on Barracks which was an enjoyable occasion. Our first committee meeting was held on 6 February (via Zoom) where we reviewed our planning for 2025. The first event will be a *Doing Research* presentation by Dr Deborah Campbell on *the Rise and Fall of Domestic Science Education for Girls in NSW 1913-1960: Lessons to be Learned* Thursday 20 March at 4 pm via Zoom (available to all ISAA members).

This will be followed by an Open Forum by Kate Laing on *Sisters in Peace* on Wednesday 21 May at 4 pm via Zoom (all ISAA members invited). Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 1 May via Zoom.

We hope to have a Work in Progress meeting where Christine Yeats will speak on research she is currently doing, the arrangements will be finalised at our March Committee meeting. We have yet to finalise arrangements for a workshop on the *Power of Fiction* to be held later in the year.

Dr Christine Jennett
Chair ISAA NSW



2024 National Conference Report & Future Suggestions

The 2024 Conference, with a focus on the developing Commonwealth, covered a wide range of issues: perspectives in the writing of history, archaeology, Indigenous land rights, medical practice, family history, visual arts, the persistence of the “alien” in our public policy, festival culture, and collecting statistics. Mark McKenna gave a lecture on Manning Clark’s view of Australia and in the evening spoke informally at Manning Clark House on the role of the house in general and Dymphna in particular.

Work is progressing on putting all of these presentations together for the whole membership in a publication that will have world-wide access through our relationship with *Informit*. The current aim is to have this publication in members’ hands in the second half of 2025.

It is also worth noting that despite the Conference fee for two days being reduced from \$140 to \$100 the Conference budget balanced, with even a small profit of \$24. The disappointing aspect was that only 20 ISAA members attended, made up mainly of the presenters and sometimes their partners. However, several Canberra locals came to the Lecture and to Manning Clark House.

For the Future:

- Council resolved that because the amount of work involved and in respect of the numbers, we will continue with it being held every second year. Your opinions are welcome.
- Council would also like member’s opinions on having the 2026 Conference in Sydney on two grounds:
 - It is where the majority of ISAA members live.
 - For those travelling Interstate getting to Sydney can be more direct than getting to Canberra with more transport alternatives.
- If it was to be held in Sydney in 2026 I would appreciate a Sydney person helping me with the logistics of venue and catering while I work on the program and papers.

Ian Keese
Conference Organiser



Call for Papers: 2025 issue of the *ISAA Review*

The *ISAA Review* is a key means by which we share our research interests with other members of the association and beyond. Following on from the exciting issue published in 2024, we aim to publish Volume No. 21 in the second half of 2025. This will also have no designated theme, so we encourage all ISAA members to contribute to the issue. The *Review* accepts different types of contributions, ranging from scholarly research articles to reviews, as follows:

1. Research articles of 3,000 – 6,000 words. These contributions will be peer reviewed by at least two reviewers.
2. Opinion pieces of 1,000 words. These are not peer-reviewed but contributions must accord with the principles of ISAA (see <https://www.isaa.org.au/about/purpose-of-isaa>) and decisions on inclusion will be made by the Editorial Board.
3. Creative Corner, no word limit. Examples include short fiction and poetry. These are not peer-reviewed but contributions must accord with the principles of ISAA and decisions on inclusion will be made by the Editorial Board.
4. Book Reviews of 500 – 1,000 words. Ideally, books reviewed are written, edited or contain chapters by ISAA members. These are not peer-reviewed and are included at the discretion of the Book Reviews editor and the Editorial Board. (see below for more information on book reviews).

The **deadline for submission of contributions is Monday 16 June 2025**, for publication in the second half of 2025.

Please consult the *Review* Style Guide to format your contribution: <https://www.isaa.org.au/isaa-review/>.

Please send queries and contributions to info@isaa.org.au. We look forward to receiving your contributions to the 2025 issue!

Assist in the production of the *ISAA Review* through Book Reviews

1. We need volunteers to review books. Please let us know if you would like to be considered to undertake reviews, and in what areas of scholarship, broad or narrow, you have suitable expertise.
2. Are there any particular books published in the last year or two that you would propose for review in our journal.

Please reply to info@isaa.org.au by **20 March 2025**.

Alan Roberts currently manages our book review process but we are looking for a volunteer to take on that role for the future.

Dr Hilary Yerbury
ISAA National President

Expressions of Interest: *ISAA Review* Editorial Board

Are you looking for a new challenge? Want to become more involved in the association? Why not consider becoming a member of the Editorial Board of the *ISAA Review*? The *Review* is a core publication of the association and the primary means by which we share our research interests with other members and the rest of the world. The publication is going through an exciting time of renewal and revitalisation, and you could make a valuable contribution to this process.

What are you looking for?

While the Editorial Board will be small, usually five members, we would like it where possible to represent the diversity of our membership. This includes variety in disciplinary background (humanities, sciences), geographical location (different states and territories), and experience (from seasoned editors to those seeking a new challenge).

What does a Board member do?

The Editorial Board advises the Editor on all matters related to the publication of the *Review*.

For instance:

1. Acting as peer-reviewers to submitted research articles.
2. Assisting to find second peer-reviewers among the ISAA membership.
3. Making decisions on the final publication of all contributions, including opinion pieces, creative works, and reviews.
4. Advancing ideas to further improve the *Review* and its editorial processes.
5. Establishing a strategic direction for the *Review* and ISAA publications.
6. Assisting in minor editorial work.
7. Providing any other advice requested by the Editor.

How much of my time will it take?

This may vary, for instance depending on the stage of the publication process. Most work will be required at the peer review and publication decision stages. As a guide, the Editorial Board will meet at least three times per year for one-hour meetings via Zoom or similar. Other work may be conducted via email as required.

How do I sign up?

Send your Expression of Interest to info@isaa.org.au by **Friday 28 March 2025**. In this EOI, please include:

- why you would like to become a member of the Editorial Board
- what you hope to contribute to the Editorial Board, and
- any experience you may have in editing and/or with the publishing process.

If you have any questions, send them to info@isaa.org.au. We look forward to receiving your EOIs!

Dr Hilary Yerbury
ISAA National President

Scholarly Reflections

This issue includes the following Scholarly Reflections

Darshi Arachige – *Is Twin Paradox Only A Thought Experiment of A Non-paradox?*

Jim Hodges – *How the Universe Works: Fact & Appearance in Physics and Cosmology - Pt 6, Gravity*

The views and opinions expressed in the articles published in the Scholarly Reflections are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of ISAA.



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Scholarly Reflections cont.

Is Twin Paradox Only A Thought Experiment of A Non-paradox?

A Personal Touch

We hardly worry about time differences at different locations. Unless we travel overseas or have someone close in a different country! Many countries adjust the time to save daylight. Some countries are so wide that crossing their borders horizontally cuts across many longitudes, hence several time zones.

Thus, even before seasonal time adjustments, time at two borders of the same country can be more than an hour apart. Let's extend this to a person staying in a country like New Zealand and another in Hawaii.

This hit me hard when I wanted to contact a close relative who was born where I live but travelled across many time zones to be at least 17 hours behind. On his birthday, I wanted to send a happy birthday wish as a text message. The dilemma was whether to send my wishes on the day as it dawned on where I lived or wait until the day dawned on the country he lived.

Travelling Almost As Fast As Light

Around the same time, I read an interesting article in the ISAA Newsletter about the famous twin paradox. (1) Regardless of the intention behind the above article, it together with the above birthday dilemma kindled some thoughts to ponder about the famous paradox.

Through Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity, scientists deduce that, when people travel near the speed of light, they experience a shortening of time relative to the slow-moving people they left behind.

Strange Twins

As I am not a psychist, I am seeking help from a popular book on physics (2) to discuss the paradox. Let us assume one travels at 99.99999999 per cent of the speed of light, if it is ever possible. This can cause everything about the person to slow down by a factor of 70,000.

If one Mr Fisk leaves Earth just after breakfast at such a speed to go to the star Sirius, he can be there for lunch and starting right after, can likely come home for dinner. However, the length of time involved would be as long as 18 years to his twin brother, who was left on Earth in the morning. (2). The person who remained on Earth would be 18 years older than the twin brother who returned from Sirius in a few hours on his clock. The assumption is that the ageing process too slows down by a factor of about 70,000 due to the speed and thus, the span of a full 18 years only could add a few hours to the traveller's age. This is the so-called Twin Paradox.

Obviously, apart from the speeds beyond belief, this is only a simplification of reality as there is no allowance given for acceleration and deceleration that should happen when leaving and arriving at a destination. We are not even sure whether humans can stand such massive changes in speed. Thus, here we are in the domain of science fiction.

Can We Learn from Pseudoscience, too?

In our mundane world of ordinary affairs, is the Twin Paradox a thought experiment about a real paradox or a cause for a scientific misconception? Let us look at it through the anecdote about my close relative celebrating a birthday on the far side of the world. It is illogical to

Scholarly Reflections cont.

consider a birthday with reference to one's residence. Where scientists confuse mere mortals like us, astrologers, usually with no strong training in science, definitively explain how to fix one's birth. They cast a person's birth chart on the time at the location where the birth takes place.

'A HOROSCOPE is simply a chart of the heavens showing a certain position of the planets and zodiacal signs relative to each other and the earth... It is therefore evident that *Time* and *Place* are the basic factors in the calculation of the horoscope.'

(3)

The point is that astrology places the right importance on the location of birth. The twin paradox does not care about the location of birth. *It is only logical to recognise one's birth with the time in the location where the person was born, not where he or she travels and lives afterwards.* The determination of age starts from that specific point in time and space. Logically, the age, excluding that of an infant, is the difference of time in years between the date of birth and the date in focus at the birth location. This seems to be the rational way to determine the age of an Earthling. In practice, we base our reading of time on where we are and not where the person celebrating the birthday is. In any case, we can only be off by about a day, not years.

A Thought to Take Away

Why shouldn't the above calculation of age be the case with our traveller to Sirius? The person was born on Earth at the same place and around the same time when his twin brother was born. Thus, whether he travelled a distance of nine light-years and came back at near light speed or not, his date of birth and the time on Earth since, do not change. *Thus, unless a pseudoscientific logic is used, both twins are of the same age irrespective of their possibly different appearance.* Travelling at relativistic speed, therefore, cannot give rise to a paradox.

Do we need to perpetuate this so-called thought experiment of twin paradox which, at the core, is not even a paradox, but a myth created with a feeble logic? Do we want to employ a consistent rationale for both terrestrial and interstellar scenarios, or change our guidelines to grab attention to a scientific theory? Isn't it easy and sensible to be consistent?

References

1. Hodges, J (1924) 'How the Universe Works: Fact and Appearance in Physics and Cosmology Part 4, Twin Paradox', Scholarly Reflections, *ISAA National Newsletter*, 82, p. 9.
2. Gamow, G (1961) *One Two Three... Infinity*, Dover Publications, N.Y. p. 101.
3. Heindel, M (1928) *Simplified Scientific Astrology*, Melvin Powers Wilshire Book Company, CA. pp. 13–14.

(This is based on an essay previously published on Medium).

Darshi Arachige
ISAA Member

Scholarly Reflections cont.

How the Universe Works: Fact & Appearance in Physics and Cosmology - Pt 6, Gravity

The ether is solid, not fluid, as shown by breaking an old pair of polaroid sun glasses and rotating one lens through 90 degrees in front of the other – the resultant opacity confirms that light is a polarised shear wave in a solid medium. The other thing to know is that light speed is slower in the reduced ether density near a large gravitating body, as seen in the bending of starlight close to the Sun.

Matter consists of particles composed of standing ether-waves, which when higher in the ether above the Earth need more internal energy than when lower, this being shown by (i) the necessity of expending energy to raise a clump of matter to a greater height through the ether, and (ii) the conversion of the internal energy of that clump of matter into accelerating motion when it is free-falling through the ether. Clumps of matter remain at ether-rest or in uniform motion through the ether unless acted on by an external force, and action and reaction are equal and opposite – when you kick a brick the ether kicks back!

The positive and negative charges of elementary subatomic particles arise when (a) a proton compacts the ether internally causing an external tensile strain in the surrounding ether (positive charge) and (b) an electron attenuates the ether internally causing an external compressive strain in the surrounding ether (negative charge). All particles seek to reduce the amount of the ether agitation and strain required to sustain them: hence a proton and an electron are attracted to each other by ether strain relief when the stretched ether surrounding the proton is reduced by the compressed ether around the electron, and similarly, adjoining electrons repel to relieve the compressive ether strain between them, and adjoining protons repel to relieve ether tensile strain between them.

A proton coupled to an electron, also known as an atom of hydrogen, is held together by a powerful electrostatic attraction, but a tiny imbalance in (a) the ether attenuation surrounding the proton and (b) the ether compaction surrounding the electron, results in a small net attenuation – a conditioning of the surrounding ether which creates the force of gravity. This weak long-distance force is magnified by the sheer number of protons and electrons making up the total mass of our planet, and a gradient of diminishing ether attenuation keeps our massive Moon in orbit, even though it is 1.25 light sec away!

To sum up, gravity simply comes from the ether density around a large body being less near its surface and higher at a greater distance, thus impelling the particles in the smaller body to seek a reduction in their internal energy by drifting closer to the large body, which is in contrast to the gravity myth of (1) 'action-at-a-distance through absolute nothingness', or that (2) massive bodies 'bend spacetime and curve the path of inertial motion'. According to the 'equivalence principle' in relativity, one 'g' gravitation at sea level is identical to one 'g' acceleration on a space-rocket, but although Earth gravity slows down a terrestrial clock, experiment shows that acceleration of a space-rocket clock does not!

Hence our failure to recognise the fundamental role of ether has been a spanner in the works in understanding how gravity works!

*Jim Hodges
Ether Drift Club
ISAA member*

Members' reports on conferences and meetings

I attended the joint meeting of the Australian, American and New Zealand Mathematical Societies held in Auckland from December 9 to December 13, 2024. This was a large conference with 700-plus attendees and there were hundreds of research papers presented, as well as more general talks. I gave a talk based upon some recent research.

The research had an unusual origin, as the idea for it arose when I came across a 1930 paper by the famous British mathematicians G H Hardy and J E Littlewood (it is a bit unusual for current research in mathematics to start from research of 95 years ago). The work will appear in the journal *Real Analysis Exchange* (Michigan State University Press). Apart from his mathematics, Hardy is known for his general interest book *A Mathematician's Apology* (originally published 1940).

Unsurprisingly, this book is not without its critics, but it remains a classic exposition of a certain view of mathematics. The novelist Graham Greene wrote of it 'I know no writing – except perhaps Henry James' introductory essays – which conveys so clearly and with such an absence of fuss the excitement of the creative artist'. Hardy appears as a character in the 2015 film *The Man Who Knew Infinity*, which is about the obscure Indian mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan, and his relationship with Hardy after Hardy invited him to Cambridge where he arrived in 1914.

Rodney Nillsen PhD

ISAA NSW



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Joint Meeting of the New Zealand, Australian and American Mathematical Societies, Dec 2024

Start Date	End Date	Organizer	Location	Registration
December 9, 2024	December 13, 2024	New Zealand, Australian and American Mathematical Societies	Auckland, New Zealand	Closed

Members' Publications, Presentations, Activities and News

Christine de Matos PhD

Publications

Christine de Matos, "'A Corrupt Western Ethic': Australian Responses to Japan's Eugenic Protection Law during the Allied Occupation'. In Maho Toyoda' (ed), *A Global History of Japan's Eugenic Protection Law*, Tokyo: Jimbun Shoin, 2024, 101-141. Published in Japanese only. She attended the book launch in Tokyo in January 2025.

Awards and Prizes

Christine de Matos was co-runner up for the 2024 National Coalition of Independent Scholars (NCIS) Elizabeth Eisenstein Essay Prize for her article 'The Home as a Space for Re-education: Imperialism, Military Occupation, and Housekeeping Manuals' (<https://www.ncis.org/news/2024/2024-eisenstein-prizewinner-announced>).

Christine de Matos was awarded a US\$600 Conference Support Grant from the NCIS to aid her attendance at the 'Occupation Studies Research Network – Members' Conference: Themes, Approaches, and Future Possibilities', to be held in London, 10-11 July 2025.

Rodney Nillsen PhD

Publications

Nillsen, Rodney, 'Equal Representation' *Australian Mathematics Education Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2024, pp 26-31.

Nillsen, Rodney, 'Sums associated with orbits in the binary dynamical system', *Real Analysis Exchange*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2025, pp 1-37.

Trevor R Parmenter AM PhD

Award Presentation

7 January 2025, Trevor R Parmenter AM PhD Hon. DLitt FAAIDD was awarded Emeritus Membership of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disability (AAIDD) for his dedicated years of service, including the Presidential Award in 1999 for global leadership.

Publication

Kerr, S., Sackley, R., Gilroy, J., Parmenter, T. R., O'Brien, 'The Role of Trust, Respect, and Relationships in Maintaining Lived Experience and

Indigenous Authority in Co-Designed Research with People Living with Disability'. *Social Sciences*, 13 (4) 2004, doi.org/10.3390/socsci13040192

Ron Popenhagen PhD

Publication

Popenhagen, Ron J., 'Festival Culture and the Liberal Arts: Celebrating Humanities', *Agora: The Liberal Arts at Luther College*, (Decorah, Iowa, USA), 'Special Essay', Fall 2024, Volume 37, Number 1, pp. 3-8.

Christine Yeats FRAHS

Presentations

13 November 2024, RAHS/WEA Workshop, *Stepping Ashore: Researching passenger and other arrivals*.

25 November 2024, Kogarah Historical Society, *Crimes and misdemeanours: St George District*.

1 February, Randwick & District Historical Society, *Who Lived in my House*.

25 February, RAHS Workshop, *A Legacy in Print: Honouring the Past and Embracing the Future of the Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*.

10 March, Lane Cove Women's Action and Information Group, *Introducing the Jessie Street National Women's Library*.

Contributions to the ISAA Newsletter in 2025

The deadlines for contributions to the Newsletter in 2025 will be:

6 June

5 September

14 November

